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Letter dated 15 October 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw to your attention the statement issued on 9 October 2001 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union concerning the Great Lakes region (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Jean **de Ruyt**
Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 15 October 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

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Statement issued on 9 October 2001 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union concerning the Great Lakes region

Great Lakes region

Following adoption of the common position concerning conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa and its conclusions of 14 May 2001, the Council noted the avenues traced by the Presidency for future work and examined in Council bodies with a view to establishing a policy towards the Great Lakes region which would, in particular, better coordinate the instruments available to the Union and lead to greater coherence in its actions. This is a long-term exercise, requiring short and medium-term actions, but whose success will principally depend on the desire for peace shown by the parties to the peace processes.

The Council welcomed the encouraging developments in the two peace processes over the past two months.

Democratic Republic of the Congo (Lusaka Process). The successful Gaborone meeting led by the facilitator, Mr. Masire, at the end of August opens up the way for the inter-Congolese dialogue which will begin as of 15 October in Addis Ababa and which the Union hopes will lead to an inclusive and democratic transition. This is a political exercise essential for the future of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the stability of the region. The problem of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of combatants belonging to the "negative forces" has been the subject of various initiatives from Kinshasa and Kigali. The Council urges the responsible international organizations (United Nations, inter alia, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank) to promptly pursue the preparation of necessary DDR programmes. The Political Committee of the Lusaka Agreement noted in mid-September the signatory States' intention to withdraw foreign troops and a call for continued deployment of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). The Council underlines the urgent need for the signatory States and other parties to the Lusaka Agreement to demonstrate the political will required to end support for the negative forces, and will use its influence to continue the deployment of MONUC in the framework of its existing mandate.

Burundi (Arusha Process). Similarly, the agreement reached at the end of July on guiding the transition in Burundi led by the facilitator, Mr. Mandela, also opens up new prospects, although these are still fragile in the absence of a ceasefire.

In both cases, the European Union, in close consultation with the United Nations, but also with the Organization of African Unity and the other international parties involved, must confirm its political and financial support for the two peace processes that are under way. It is in this light that the Council has agreed on certain actions in support of the peace processes and has welcomed the forthcoming mission

to the region of a ministerial troika led by the President of the Council. The main aims of this ministerial mission will be to confirm the Union's commitment, to exploit the continuing end-of-crisis dynamic by examining together with the parties concerned, the progress needed in the near future and to inform them about the short-term support actions that the Union envisages in this context.